

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF  
THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION OF THE  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
DANIEL E. LUNGREN, CHAIRMAN  
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On September 30, 1822, Joseph M. Hernández began his service in Congress as Florida's first Territorial Delegate, pioneering Hispanic-American representation in the American republic. Like other Hispanic Americans in the federal legislature during the 1800s, Hernández advanced from the periphery of the Union to hold a brief term in an office whose core duties were more diplomatic than legislative, working to turn the former Spanish colony where he was born into a state. *Hispanic Americans in Congress, 1822–2012*, chronicles the story of Hernández and the 90 Hispanics who followed him into Congress. In helping to shape Congress, these *nuevomexicanos*, Puerto Ricans, Mexican Americans, Cuban Americans, and Guamanians, among others, enriched U.S. history.



# *Hispanic Americans in Congress* 1822–2012

## ON THE COVER:

*Henry B. González of Texas is the longest-serving Hispanic American in congressional history. With years of experience as a civil rights proponent in San Antonio and Texas politics, González won a seat in the U.S. House in 1961 in a special election. He went on to serve more than 37 years, helped found the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and became the chairman of the influential House Banking Committee.*

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